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ABSTRACT

The state education department is proposing a set of process standards to be followed in developing trial projects in teacher education which will lead to competency-based certification. Standard I specifies that representatives of public schools, higher education institutions, teachers, and teacher education students must be included in planning, development, and evaluation. Interested representatives of other agencies may be included such as lay citizens. Standard II states that the cooperating agencies must address the following questions: 1) What are the stated objectives and priorities of the schools involved? 2) What competencies should a teacher have to serve in those schools? Standard III provides that the cooperating agencies must specify the evidence that they will accept and the manner in which they will ascertain that the prospective teacher has reached an acceptable level of competence. It also requires that the program provide individualized opportunities for the candidate to gain and demonstrate the competencies necessary for certification. Standard IV requires that a management system be established to provide data on student progress and the interrelationships of program components, to determine accountability for each aspect of the program, and to serve as a basis for program evaluation. (RT)

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A NEW STYLE OF CERTIFICATION

by
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A NEW STYLE OF CERTIFICATION

Introduction

In a rapidly changing society in which "old ways" are continually challenged for their relevance and validity, questions are being raised concerning the appropriateness of traditional educational patterns. Some of the questions which particularly concern the Division of Teacher Education and Certification focus on the relevance of teacher preparation and certification to teaching competence, and the accommodations to admit to teaching persons whose knowledge and teaching ability are achieved through a different set of experiences than those now prescribed for certification.

Support continues to grow for the concept that certification should be based on a teacher's demonstrated abilities instead of being based solely on his completion of a formal collegiate program. This concept is nurtured by recently developed methods for analyzing a teacher's classroom performance, e.g. Flanders, etc., and further supported by the growing concern for accountability.

Believing that the above mentioned questions and developments are worthy of serious consideration and careful response, the Department is proposing a set of process standards to be followed in developing trial projects in teacher education which will lead to a certification that signifies a measure of competence.

The term "process standards" is used to describe this system since the emphasis is on the procedures to be followed in developing meaningful

criteria to be met by prospective teachers.

The process standards promote a system of accountability because they require that those responsible for each phase of a trial project be clearly identified.

They provide for a number of agencies to combine resources and efforts to evolve acceptable criteria for teacher certification. Such criteria must be broad enough to identify qualities desirable for all teachers, yet specific enough to identify teachers who can perform well with regard to particular stated objectives and priorities of a school or region.

The process standards are interrelated; one cannot be considered independent of the others, and all process standards will be considered interdependently when trial projects are evaluated.

The standards provide for continual review and revision of programs through a managerial system which requires follow up and feedback for purposes of program improvement. They also are designed to require recognition of appropriate learning regardless of how or when the learning took place.

Trial projects may be designed for initial or continuing certification or both.

For initial state certification the cooperating agencies must certify that the candidates have--

(a) Demonstrated their ability to meet the certification competencies established by the cooperating agencies for initial employment; and

(b) Earned a bachelor's degree in fields where such degrees are now required for provisional certification.

For continuing state certification the cooperating agencies must certify that the candidates have--

(a) Demonstrated their ability to meet the certification competencies

established by the cooperating agencies for continued employment; and

(b) Earned a bachelor's degree in fields where such degrees are now required for provisional certification.

The following process standards are as firm as they can be at this time. Because they are "process" standards it is expected that they will not be static. The dynamics of the implementation of the standards in the trial projects will likely have an effect on the standards themselves.

STANDARD I

Trial projects leading to state certification must be planned, developed, monitored, and evaluated by cooperating agencies acting as a Policy Board. Representatives of the following agencies must be included:

a. public schools--representative(s) approved by the board of education

b. institutions of higher education--representative(s) approved by the chief administrative officer

c. teachers--representative(s) elected or selected by the teachers in the participating district(s), additional persons representing national or state teachers groups may be included

d. teacher education students--representative(s) selected from and approved by such students.

Representative(s) of other agencies may be included, e.g., interested lay citizens.

COMMENT:

The representatives of these agencies will establish a Policy Board with responsibility for all aspects of the development of criteria and the ultimate development of programs.

The appropriateness of the criteria and the quality of the program will be a reflection of how well the agencies have been able to work together. Functioning together will not be easy: *

1. Although each agency approaches the situation with a desire to improve the quality of professional service through better programs of preparation, each agency comes--

   a. From a context offering different background and

experience, and giving each a unique perspective of the purpose and function of preparation;

b. With unique access to or control over resources necessary to make any cooperative work; and

c. With unique limitations on the time, energy and resources it can afford to spend developing and implementing preparation programs.

2. Each agency will insist and must be assured that there will be parity both in the power to influence decisions and in the assumption of responsibility for implementing the decisions.

It might be easier to envision the four or more agencies functioning together if it could be acknowledged that different kinds of cooperation will be necessary to satisfy different needs. In a sense the agencies will perform at least three different roles:

1. PLANNING: Here all groups should be involved equally; cooperation is basically informal. The initiative to begin may be taken by any agency, but each of the other agencies should be involved to form the Policy Board as soon as possible to assure parity. The State must be formally informed of the establishment of the Policy Board.
2. CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT: Here formal adoption of policies that affect the development of criteria must take place.
3. IMPLEMENTATION: Here action must be taken by formal representatives of each agency who will commit the resources of the agency. Representatives must have the authority to act within well-defined parameters. It is at this level that the unique perspectives, resources, and limitations of each of the agencies must be fully considered and accommodated as the representatives work

toward finding the common ground on which policies and procedures can be based.

This role also involves the effective management of the resources of each agency in implementing policy. Here clear delineation of responsibility and accountability for specific aspects of the adopted procedures is essential. One or more agencies may be given responsibility for coordinating aspects of the criteria development. Such designations should be clearly established by the Policy Board.

The State does not assume that student representatives will play the same role as the college representatives or vice versa, but the State believes that each should be equally represented on the policy group. Also the role of students in programs developed for initial certification may be different from that of programs developed for continuing certification; however, in both cases student representatives should be on the Policy Board so that decisions are never made in isolation from the persons who will be affected by those decisions.

Logical relationship should exist between the development of initial and continuing criteria for certification. While interested groups may develop programs for either initial or continuing certificates, as soon as possible such groups should develop formal relationships between the two areas of certification.

The essence of cooperation requires that all parties have opportunities to present their viewpoints prior to the making of decisions, and that they continue to participate after decisions have been made.

Specific opportunities must be provided for "input" from various agencies of society directly concerned with the schools. In particular, the agencies are encouraged to seek the counsel of the professional associations

representing specialized fields (e.g., New York State Council of Teachers of English) when planning programs in specific areas.

The mandating of representation from four specific groups should not discourage the inclusion of additional agencies. While most programs would undoubtedly be improved by the participation of additional agencies, the State does not feel it is desirable or possible to mandate the appropriate additional agencies.

The cooperating agencies must understand the role of the teachers in the certification area under discussion and be able to locate and use appropriate research dealing with the preparation of school personnel.

* Certain phrases and concepts included in this comment appear in the "1971 Standard for the Preparation and Certification of School Professional Personnel" in the State of Washington, March 1, 1971.

STANDARD II

The cooperating agencies must, by their actions, address the following questions:

a. What are the stated objectives and priorities of the schools involved?

b. What competencies should a teacher have to serve in those schools?

COMMENT:

In considering the objectives and priorities of a school system, cooperating agencies may avoid the narrow confines of traditional boundaries by reviewing the following statement made by Commissioner Nyquist on humanistic education:

> Humanistic education is simply a way of looking at the world which emphasizes instead of money and things, the importance of man, his nature and central place in the universe; which teaches that all persons have dignity and worth, and that man was made just a little lower than the angels; studies that provide joy in learning, pleasure in creating, and a sense of self; programs that make a critical examination of the quality of life and society in the United States and what can be done about it; studies that lead to a repair of our ravaged environment and solve our social malignancies; that satisfy one's emotions and aspirations in an age of feeling and of a sensate culture; that lead to the development of a personal life-style, celebrate spontaneity, and make one fully human. We need to redress the value imbalances of a technological and materialistic society, with its emphasis on goods rather than the good things of life.

The time expended to develop the criteria described in this standard may be lengthy, but the effort is fundamental to the development of criteria for teachers.

It is essential that each of the agencies subscribe to the statement of objectives and priorities of the schools which is finally established. The competencies that the individual teacher is expected to demonstrate are then related to these objectives and become the criteria for obtaining a certificate and designing the preparatory program.

In dealing with the competencies necessary for the initial certificate, the cooperating agencies should focus on the performance expected of

beginning teachers. The competencies for the continuing certificate should focus on the performance expected of the experienced teacher.

STANDARD III

A. The cooperating agencies must specify the evidence that they will accept and the manner in which they will ascertain that the prospective teacher has reached an acceptable level of competence. It is expected that there will be evidence to show that, in the development of objectives, consideration has been given to insuring that the teacher is--

1. An educated person;
2. Proficient in the subject in which certification is to be granted; and
3. Capable of working with children in ways which will enhance their opportunities for learning.

B. Individualized opportunities must be provided by the preparatory program for the candidate to gain and demonstrate the competencies necessary for certification.

COMMENT:

This standard requires the establishment of explicit criteria that the candidate must meet. The emphasis is on what the teacher must be able to do rather than on any courses completed. In determining the criteria, specific reference should be given to the tasks that the teacher will be expected to perform, for example, the various roles of the elementary teacher, the biology teacher, the English teacher, etc.

In developing evidence as suggested in Standard III, part A, the cooperating agencies should give consideration to command of subject matter (knowledge criteria), teaching behaviors of the student-in-preparation (performance criteria), and the achievement of pupils taught by the student-in-preparation (product criteria). The evidence must be consistent with the objectives and priorities established in Standard II.

Continued concern must be given to the relationship of teacher behavior

to pupil behavior, difficult as that is to determine with sureness. Data must continue to be sought on the nature of the relationship between teachers and pupils so that product criteria can ultimately become part of the program.

Each teacher education student accepted in the trial project should be given immediate opportunities to demonstrate his or her ability to meet the certification criteria which shall be known to the candidate. If the student is unsuccessful in his initial attempt to meet the criteria, the preparatory program is responsible for providing appropriate means for that person to develop competence which will enable him to meet the criteria on subsequent assessment. Cooperating agencies are encouraged to devise their own approaches as long as there is evidence that provision is made for individualization and that feedback from monitoring and evaluating will be used as a basis for the continuous revision of the program.

STANDARD IV

A management system must be established for the following purposes:

a. To provide continuous data on student progress

b. to provide data on interrelationships of program components

c. to determine accountability for each aspect of the program

d. to serve as a basis for program evaluation.

COMMENT:

The need for a managerial system is based on the following premises:

a. The individual should be the primary focus of the program. Without a carefully designed and publicized system of operation the student may find his freedom and opportunities to learn restricted and possibly even misdirected.

b. In order for a program to operate efficiently, each phase of the operation must be planned in relation to all other aspects of the program.

c. Lines of responsibility must be drawn clearly to insure accountability.

d. The trial teacher education projects must be designed to include continuous evaluation and feedback into the program. This can be achieved if the evaluation system includes: (a) Self-assessment by all agencies responsible for any phase of the program; (b) concomitant and/or subsequent review by appropriate and concerned State Education Department staff; (c) invitation to outside review agencies; and (d) encouragement of active participation in the assessment process by other concerned groups.

ROLE OF THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The Department intends to participate fully in the deliberations which go into all phases of program development and implementation in order to

assist where possible and to learn. The Division of Teacher Education and Certification will draw upon the resources of the State Education Department for as many support activities as it can during the development of programs. Such activities may include consultative services, training sessions, and the preparation and dissemination of appropriate publications.

The Department will not abdicate its legal responsibility in exercising its approval function. It will also take an active part in the total evaluation of the trial projects. Evaluation of the projects will include an assessment of the role of the State Education Department.

March 15, 1971